



May 16, 2016

## FRCSE Sailors pitch in for community housing at HabiJax

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From left, Aviation Electronics Technician (AT) 2nd Class Dmitriy Chekmenov, AT3 Michael Young, ATAN Jerry Patton, ATAN Ian Brushwood, ATAN Michael Maness and AT3 Taylore Pressley separate salvaged boards at HabiJax during a volunteer project April 28. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)

**Jacksonville, Fla.** – The banging of hammers and buzzing of drills, courtesy of 15 Sailors from Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) filled the headquarters of HabiJax in Jacksonville, Florida on April 28.

HabiJax, the largest affiliate of the nationwide Habitat for Humanity organization, provides homes to needy families, but largely depends on the help of volunteers. The group is preparing for its building blitz, beginning June 6. The work the FRCSE Sailors performed, building cabinets and salvaging high-quality wood will directly contribute to that effort.

“We’re going to be building 12 homes in seven days, so we’re going to need every bit of this material,” Dan Nicholas, HabiJax warehouse operations superintendent, said.

HabiJax was established in 1988, and has grown into the largest Habitat for Humanity affiliate in the nation – building more than 2,000 homes in that time. That mission has endeared many FRCSE Sailors to their cause.

“A good friend of mine lived in a HabiJax home when he was a kid,” said Aviation



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Electronics Technician (AT) 1<sup>st</sup> Class Travis Galloway. “Having a home to grow up in is something I think a lot of us take for granted.

“I went to an event where they presented a single mother of three children with a house. She started crying because she was so grateful... it was really cool to see.”

Most of the Sailors, like Galloway, had volunteered at HabiJax before. While some helped load appliances, others sorted and salvaged boards, while one group built cabinets. The different jobs called for some collaboration.

“It’s a good thing that we’re all from the same shop because we know how to work together,” AT2 Ahmad Zephir said. “Whether it’s working with the Consolidated Automated Support System or building cabinets, we’ll get it done.”



Airman Apprentice Nickolas Cox of Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville, helps build cabinets with fellow Sailors during a community relations event at the HabiJax headquarters in Jacksonville, Florida April 28. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)



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From left, Aviation Electronics Technician (AT) 3rd Class Carlos Calle, AT2 Cody Little and AT2 Ahmad Zephir of Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville, help construct cabinets at the HabiJax headquarters in Jacksonville, Florida as part of a community relations event April 28. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)



In foreground, left to right, Aviation Electronics Technician (AT) 2nd Class Dmitriy Chekmenov, AT3 Michael Young, ATAN Michael Maness and AT1 Travis Galloway of Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville, load a refrigerator onto a trailer to be hauled to a HabiJax home April 28. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)



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Sailors from Fleet Readiness Center Southeast Detachment Jacksonville gather during a day of volunteer work at the headquarters of HabiJax, the Jacksonville division of Habitat for Humanity. The Sailors built cabinets and salvaged wood for use in future homes. (U.S. Navy Photo/Released)